



RIM Reserve Clean Water Fund-Wellhead SWCD Program Guidance

5/21/2014



Introduction

The intent of this guidance document is to outline the enrollment criteria and conditions that will govern the landowner application sign-up for this RIM Reserve conservation easement program on eligible wellhead protection lands. This guidance should be considered additive to existing RIM policy and procedure.

Statute requirements / conditions:

1. Easements will be acquired via the RIM Reserve program (MS 103F.501).
2. Permanent easements only.
3. Priority for enrollment in Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA) identified by Minnesota Dept. of Health (MDH) and mapped as high or very high vulnerability.
4. Eligible land must have been owned by the landowner for 1 year prior to application.
5. Eligible landowners – any individual or entity that is not prohibited from owning ag land under MS 500.24 Corporate Farm Law. *Farm corporations need to be certified by the MN Dept. of Agriculture, contact 651-297-2200.*

Sign-up criteria:

1. Continuous sign-up until all available funds are encumbered. Contact BWSR Easement staff for prior approval of the project site. Applications do not need to be ranked or prioritized by the SWCD prior to submittal to BWSR.
2. Priority is given to land with crop history. Lands lacking crop history, that contribute to wellhead degradation, will be reviewed on a case by case basis by BWSR, SWCD and MDH for eligibility and potential enrollment in RIM.
3. A majority, greater than 51%, of the site must be within the h or vh vulnerable area and the WHPA. This criteria should be used to deal with logical boundaries and remaining areas that are infeasible to farm. On a case by case basis the criteria may be modified to accommodate site specific conditions.
4. Source Water Contribution Areas (SWCA's) associated with h and vh WHPA's may also be enrolled upon mapping the location and/or recommendation of MDH.

(continued)

Easement Payment rates

Annually the BWSR establishes payment rates for easement programs. See the most current rate table for this information. Cropland is defined as cropped to an annually planted crop 2 of the last 5 years. CRP is considered cropland for this sign-up. Payment rates will be provided to SWCDs.

Conservation Practice Payments

For land in existing CRP contracts, no changes in vegetative cover will be required. These practice areas should be listed as RR 2b Native Grasses already established on the Conservation Easement Practice Payment Worksheet (CEPPW) form. For new CRP contracts plan \$s will be available to cover planting cost that CRP does not cover. These new planting practice areas should be listed as RR 2a Native Grasses to be established on the CEPPW.

Forms and items needed to complete the RIM application materials

A complete application package containing all the items listed in the document titled '*RIM Reserve application materials to submit for CWL buffers and wellhead protection easements*' should be prepared and submitted directly to BWSR St. Paul RIM staff. DO NOT SEND TO YOUR BWSR Board Conservationist.